

MERCATOR:

O R,

Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British Trade*, &c.

From Saturday, March 20. to Tuesday, March 23. 1713.

The Dutch proved to be our most dangerous Rivals in Trade.

The People of Britain ought to be made sensible of it.

The Dutch mighty busie to draw us in here to reject the Bill of Commerce.

Foreigners employ'd here to manage our People, and Pamphlets written by Foreigners to embroil us.

The Dutch our Rivals in Eight several Branches of our Trade.

What part of our Trade are they not our Rivals in?

The Dutch not to be blamed, but we are to be cautioned.

THE *MERCATOR* having affirm'd, that the Dutch are our most dangerous Rivals in Trade, it seems necessary to say something to that Matter, as it relates to the French Trade; for if they do not Rival us in our Trade to France, it would seem not to be spoken Apofitly to the present Case.

The *MERCATOR* therefore thinks our People ought to be made sensible how, and in what particulars, the Dutch are our Rivals in Trade, generally understood, and how in the French Trade more particularly.

In examining this, we shall come to give a better Account of the Conduct of the Dutch in our present Affair of Commerce; Why the Dutch are so eminently concern'd to prevent our passing the Commerce Bill? And why so many Foreigners write Papers and Pamphlets in Defence of the English Commerce?

It is really a mysterious thing to see how zealous our Foreigners, as well Merchants as Envoys, &c. are in Defence of the English Commerce. We have had formerly several Clamours of French Money coming over to bribe our Parties and great Men, and they would fain revive those things now, if they could tell how or where to fix it. But those Slanders have all been crush'd in the birth by their own scandalous appearance.

But if we should say, that Dutch Money has been employ'd in order to keep alive the Clamour against our Trade to France; its believed we might be able to get better Proof of it than these Men are aware of. What *British Merchants* are these, who are thus Corrupted by Foreigners to give away their Commerce, and reject that Trade which the Dutch greedily embrace, and thereby give the Bread out of Poores Mouths to enrich our Neighbours?

To return to the Dutch, and those parts of our Trade in which they are our Rivals, because we are dealing now with a Sett of Writers who will Oppose the most known Truths with the greatest Assurance, and that can

tell us, that the French can carry their Goods into Alsace by the Navigation of the River *Seine*, and that the Land-Carriage is but small from the said River into Alsatia.

When such unexampled Impudence is practiced in Print, what may we not expect? Therefore the *MERCATOR* expecting they should deny that the Dutch are our Rivals in our Trade, and should ask in what Trades the Dutch are our Rivals, lays down the following particular Trades, in which he will at any time prove that the Dutch are so, to our exceeding Damage, and perhaps with some Injustice too. Let these Men Defend their Dutch employers, if they can.

And having done this, it will be easie to shew, that the interfering Interests of the Dutch in those Branches of our Trade, are the true Reasons of their present Opposing our Commerce with France, and their bribing and hiring so many Mercenaries to raise a Clamour among the People, and to Print scandalous and scurrilous Libels against it, some of which are actually written by the Foreigners themselves, who being grown rich by their sharing in our Commerce, are now forward to betray it to other Foreigners; and take upon them, with hardned Faces, to tell us what Trade we ought, and what we ought not to carry on: As if these, whose Interest is foreign as well as their Birth, were to be the Directors to this Nation in their Trade; and as if our Eyes were so blinded that we could not see when we were Betray'd, Bought and Sold to the Dutch, under a popular pretence of preserving our Trade from the French! And Dutchmen must teach us to preserve our Trade!

*Thus Goose goes to Law for Ganders Land,
And Fox, the Dutch Lawyer, takes the Cause in hand.*

But to return to the Question, Whether the Dutch are our Rivals in Trade, yea or no? The *MERCATOR* affirms they are, and that in a manner visibly to our Damage in Trade, as in the following particulars.

1. In

1. *In our Tobacco Trade*; In which not having Colonies in America sufficient to supply them, they are now become Planters of Tobacco at home, of which they now produce so great a Quantity, that they Export *Communibus Annis*, above Eighty Thousand Hogsheds of Tobacco in a Year of their own Growth, and through those Markets with it where Ours used to be sold, and not a little of this to France, where, for want of the Treaty of Commerce taking place, they run away with that part of the Trade which otherwise would be Ours. Is this Rivalling us, or is it not? And is there an apparent Reason in this, why the Dutch are so loth we should open our Trade to France, or is there not?

2. *In our Fishing Trade*; In which, from a Trade upon our Sufferance, and by a Tributary License from England for Fishing in our Seas, which was formerly the Case; they are Encroached so far upon us by Degrees, and by insensible Approaches, as that now they dispute the Right upon all Occasions with the utmost Obstinacy, and have Engrossed Two thirds of all the Markets in Europe, for the Sale of their Fish: So that they have, as it were, beaten the British Nation out of the White Herring Fishing, without whose Leave, in former times, they could not catch a Cast of Fish in a Year. Let our wise *British Merchants*, who set up to preserve our Commerce, answer in this Case; Is this Rivalling us or no? And, even in this very Article, Do they now enjoy an open Market or not? While we, for want of the Treaty, are very much shut out. Can any Man be so blind as not to see the Reason in this, why the Dutch are so eager to hinder us from Opening our Commerce with France? And is this a time for Foreigners to Libel us out of our Trade?

3. *In our Woollen Manufactures*; We talk loudly of the French making Woollen Manufactures, and Under-selling us abroad, and of their getting our Wooll from England and from Ireland, and it is too true; and they do what they can, and get as much Wooll as they can. But not a word must be said of the Dutch Manufactures, and of the Dutch getting our Wooll as fast out of Lincolnshire as the French get it out of Kent. We forget that the Dutch were so nice upon us in the late War, that they forbid, by Placaert, the Clothing their Army with English Kerseys and Broad-Cloth, but obliged them to be Clothed with their own Manufactures? We forget that the Dutch are come to that perfection in the Clothing Trade, that, if it were not strictly Prohibited, all the fine Black Cloth we wear in England would be brought from thence, as well for the fineness of the Cloth, as for the Dye, in which we cannot match them? But these Things, and many more, we willingly overlook in the Dutch, tho' we make so great an Outcry of it in the French; And all the while that we are wheedled by the Dutch to shut the Door against the French Trade, and keep our Manufactures out of France, the Dutch carry in great Quantities of Woollen Goods of their own making thither, and to Turkey also, of

which hereafter; and so make their Market of our unaccountable Folly. Is this Rivalling us in Trade, or is it not?

4. *In our African Trade*; It is true, much of this Trade has been lost by the late Fractions and Division of Interests, among our own Merchants, the Company, and the separate Traders or Interlopers, as the present Divisions are now ruining our French Trade, and will in time ruine all our Trade, if not prevented: But the *MERCATOR* appeals to the Royal African Company, to answer those who Question whether the Dutch are our Rivals on the Coast of Guinea, or no? And whether the Encroachments they have made upon our Trade there are not such, that they have gotten almost all the Gold Trade from us? And if some immediate Care is not taken by the Parliament and Government to Support and Encourage the said Company, and to secure their exclusive Right in that Trade in a better manner to the Company, than they have enjoyed it for some Years past; that whole Trade must inevitably fall into the Hands of the Dutch, who stand ready to take hold of it, and take all possible Occasions now to Encroach upon and Supplant us; of which the *MERCATOR* will be at all times ready to give sufficient Demonstration. And are the Dutch our Rivals in Trade then, or are they not?

The *MERCATOR* has not time to enter into all the Particulars of our Commerce in which the Dutch are our Rivals; but it might rather be said in general, What Trade have we in which they are not our Rivals, and in which they have not made considerable Encroachments upon us to their great Advantage? Particularly

In our East-India Trade,
In our Dantzick and East-Country Trade,
In the Turkey Trade,
And, ingeneral, in our Shipping and Navigation:

Of all which the *MERCATOR* shall speak in their Course.

The short Inference drawn from these Premises, is this; That the Dutch being manifestly Encroachers upon our Trade, and our Rivals in every considerable Branch of it; surely it can never be, that they should be our Counsellors in the great Questions of promoting our Commerce! And when we see the Dutch thus eager to prevent our Opening this or that particular Branch of Trade, while at the same time they carefully Open the same Branch of Trade for themselves; it may put us upon seriously enquiring Whether they seek our Interest or their own? And whether they do not endeavour to keep us out on purpose, that they may get in? In which Case, tho' we do not blame them for the Bait, it is hoped, we may take Care of Ourselves, and avoid the Hook.

